

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE  
CITY OF WILLIAMSBURG  
January 13, 2010**

The Williamsburg Economic Development Authority held its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, January 13, 2010 at 3:00 p.m. at the Quarterpath Recreation Center, 202 Quarterpath Road, Meeting Room 2.

The following Directors were present: T. Montgomery Mason, Chairman, Joseph W. Brinkley, William H. Carr, Edward Richardson, Tonya Boone and Thomas W. Gillman. Mario Kokolis, Vice-Chair, was absent.

Also present were J.F. Phillips, Jr., attorney and secretary for the Authority, and Michele Mixner DeWitt, City of Williamsburg Economic Development Director.

**I. Call to Order**

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. The secretary noted that a quorum of the directors was present.

**II. Approval of Minutes from November 19, 2009 Meeting**

Mr. Brinkley moved that the minutes from the November 19, 2009 meeting be approved as presented, which included a revision on page 2, that Mr. Carr "Recused" instead of "Abstained". The Motion was seconded by Ms. Boone and the Motion was passed by the following votes:

Tonya Boone	Aye
Joseph W. Brinkley	Aye
William H. Carr	Aye
Thomas W. Gillman	Abstained
T. Montgomery Mason	Aye
Edward Richardson	Aye

**III. Review of Financial Statements**

The Directors reviewed the financial reports for November and December, 2009. Michele Mixner DeWitt noted that the \$1,500.00 fee received in December was from the Bond issued to Colonial Community Services, Inc.

**IV. Old Business**

Discussion continued regarding a city retail destination map and it was suggested that Michele Mixner DeWitt should prepare a draft invitation for bids to be specifically addressed at the Authority's next meeting. Mr. Gillman suggested that quarterly updates and online updates should be included. It was determined that the Blacksburg map is a good model since its business situation is similar to Williamsburg and that the invitation for bids should call for annual and quarterly updates.

Ms. Boone pointed out the need to develop a methodology for measuring the impact of the map. There was discussion about how much information should be included on the map such as business hours, nature of business, etc., and it was pointed out that such additional information would be more easily accomplished on the online version.

Mr. Gillman moved that Michele Mixner DeWitt be requested to prepare an invitation for bids for a city retail destination map to be brought back to the next meeting for approval. The Motion was seconded by Mr. Richardson and the Motion was passed by the following votes:

Tonya Boone	Aye
Joseph W. Brinkley	Aye
William H. Carr	Aye
Thomas W. Gillman	Aye
T. Montgomery Mason	Aye
Edward Richardson	Aye

## **V. New Business**

**A.** Michele Mixner DeWitt reported that she and Mayor Zeidler had attended a creative economy conference in Santa Fe last year where they found out about ArtSpace, a nonprofit real estate development company that specializes in developing cost effective rental spaces for artists. Among its other activities ArtSpace conducts feasibility studies to determine the potential for developing such space in various localities. Ms. Mixner DeWitt contacted ArtSpace regarding the possibility of a feasibility study for Williamsburg and received a letter proposing to conduct a preliminary feasibility study for a fee of \$12,500.00, inclusive of all customary costs. Mr. Phillips received the letter and found that it did not include various provisions required by Virginia law. Consequently, he prepared the draft contract that accompanied the agenda which includes the required provisions and also modifies and clarifies various other provisions contained in the letter. Subject to reaching a signed agreement, ArtSpace representatives will come to Williamsburg on March 2 and 3, 2010 where they will spend time touring the City, meeting with the focus group provided for in the agreement and carrying out the other on-site work described in the agreement. The names of focus group participants are included in the meeting packet. Because ArtSpace is the only organization of its type, its employment can be handled as a sole-source procurement instead of through competitive bidding. Mr. Phillips pointed out that the agreement creates no commitment beyond the initial step. It was suggested that the last page of the agreement include a provision to require ArtSpace to provide a written report including all supporting documents they relied upon to reach their conclusions.

Mr. Brinkley moved that Ms. Mixner DeWitt be authorized to submit the draft agreement to ArtSpace for signature and that the Authority's Chairman be authorized to sign the agreement and further to agree to minor modifications with approval of the City

Attorney. The Motion was seconded by Mr. Richardson and the Motion was passed by the following vote:

Tonya Boone	Aye
Joseph W. Brinkley	Aye
William H. Carr	Aye
Thomas W. Gillman	Aye
T. Montgomery Mason	Aye
Edward Richardson	Aye

It was noted that payment of the \$12,500.00 fee for the study would represent 13% of the authority's remaining undesignated funds.

**B.** Ms. Mixner DeWitt noted that a proposal had been received from Ron Hess of the William and Mary School of Business under which he would lead a team charged with helping city businesses position themselves to take advantage of opportunities as the economy improves. It was suggested that a group be assembled consisting of seasoned business professionals to lead a focus group to ascertain what city businesses need. Bill Bean of William and Mary TBC would assist and the cost would be approximately \$4,000.00 to retain Ron Hess to assemble the group. Ms. Boone recommended that a professor of marketing or business strategy would be best equipped to conduct such an analysis. She expressed concern about the effectiveness of a small group and suggested that the group include a broader sample. Mr. Carr questioned whether a marketing focus might be too restrictive but Ms. Boone responded that a market study involves considerably more than determining how to attract customers and specifically includes an analysis of the business community as it is and how it is likely to evolve and how businesses can take advantage of the evolution. It was suggested that it would be a good idea to let ArtSpace complete its study first since the two studies will have some relationship. Ms. Mixner DeWitt and Ms. Boone will meet with Mr. Hess regarding conduct of the study, how to go about it and come up with a proposal for the next meeting.

**C.** Mr. Gillman reported that the Existing Business subcommittee had looked at the Façade Grant Program. It was noted that many communities have façade programs. The purpose is to make the community look more inviting with the belief that improved aesthetics will encourage increased business visitation. It was also noted that many such programs do not treat all areas equally and may require matching funds. It was suggested that a task force of two or three EDA members, one from planning staff and one from the Architect Review Board be assembled to work out details of such a program to be presented to the EDA. The group will need to survey other programs in putting together its draft proposal. It was agreed to carry the matter over and resume discussion next month to include discussion of attributes and any primary negatives of such a program.

**D.** The audit for the Year Ended June 30, 2009 was received. Mr. Brinkley moved that the audit be accepted as presented. Ms. Boone seconded the Motion and the Motion was passed by the following votes:

Tonya Boone	Aye
Joseph W. Brinkley	Aye
William H. Carr	Aye
Thomas W. Gillman	Aye
T. Montgomery Mason	Aye
Edward Richardson	Aye

**E.** The recent work session with City Council was discussed and found to be positive. It was noted that the next Business Roundtable will be held on February 9, 2010 at Sal's Restaurant with no speaker. There are approximately 35 representatives who regularly attend the sessions but there is a need to recruit more participants from the retail industry. There will be a speaker from High Speed Rail at the March session; however, speakers must be obtained for the April, May and June sessions.

It was noted that there is a need to have a proposed budget to present to City Council for the Fall Retreat. Currently the annual bond fee payments are the only external source of contracted revenue.

## **VI. Subcommittee Reports**

There were no other subcommittee reports.

### **A. Existing Business**

Mr. Brinkley moved that Michele Mixner DeWitt be authorized to contact members to set up an alternate meeting date for the March session as there is a scheduling conflict with the March 10<sup>th</sup> meeting date. Mr. Richardson seconded the Motion and the Motion was passed with the following vote:

Tonya Boone	Aye
Joseph W. Brinkley	Aye
William H. Carr	Aye
Thomas W. Gillman	Absent
T. Montgomery Mason	Aye
Edward Richardson	Aye

## **VII. Economic Development Director Reports**

It was noted that Ms. Mixner DeWitt and Ms. Boone will attend the Economic Alliance annual meeting on January 14, 2010 and that Ms. Mixner DeWitt had spoken to William and Mary School of Business representatives and shared local business needs for the professors to use as case study work for the students. Interested businesses include the Virginia Regional Ballet and Power Babies (a robot created to interact with infants).

**VIII. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Authority will be at 3:00 p.m. on February 10, 2010.  
There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

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J.F. Phillips, Jr., Secretary

APPROVED:

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Chairman